

The monthly bulletin of the  
Bar Hill Residents Association,  
distributed to all residents

#### New Residents

We welcome this month:

Mr. and Mrs. Burnett, 11 Acorn Avenue ✓

#### Many Thanks

Hilda Blanden wishes to thank all the extremely kind people of the Village who subscribed to the lovely gift of nightdresses. They are greatly appreciated. Thank you all so very, very much. I hope to see you soon.

#### Bar Hill C.P. School

Our Christmas Celebrations are being held on Tuesday, December 9th at 2.15 and 7 p.m. We would like to extend an invitation to everyone in Bar Hill to come along.

#### Women's Institute

At the next meeting, at 7.45 p.m. on Thursday, 4th December, a representative from Eaden Lilley will speak about soft furnishings, and there will be a Christmas buffet.

#### "Lost but not Leased"

A Pantomime presented by The Bar Hill Drama Group. In the School Hall on 20th December at 8.15 or thereabouts. Tickets: Adults 3/- Children 1/6, available shortly from Mrs. Willows, 24 Almond Grove.

#### "Humpty Dumpty on Ice"

A trip has now been organised to see a matinee performance at the Wembley Pool on Saturday, 21st February. The coach fare will be 10/-, and entrance is 10/- also. Seats may be booked by contacting Mr. T. Barnes (Crafts Hill 221).

#### Bar Hill Library

The new times of the library, held in the school hall, are Monday, 7 - 7.30 and Friday, 3.45 - 4.45. Mrs. Wood of 3 Almond Grove has very kindly taken over Monday evenings.

Some of the books are changed every term, and last week we received 200 new ones. A few of the titles are: "Blakes Reach" by Catherine Gaskin; "Mr. Midshipman Hornblower" by C. S. Forester; "Bath Tangle", "Black Sheep" and "These Old Shades" by G. Heyer; "The Watercress Girl" by H. E. Bates; "Anna Karenina" by Leo Tolstoy; "The Golden Rendezvous" by Alistair Maclean. Non-fiction: "The Rocks Remain" by Gavin Maxwell, author of "Ring of Bright Water"; "The Prime of Life" by Simone de Beauvoir; "Colour for the Amateur" by M. L. Hall; "A Silver Plated Spoon" by John, Duke of Bedford.

Marsha Palmann

#### Bar Hill Church Centre: Newcomers

A coffee morning is being held at Mrs. Neill's, 1 Oatlands Avenue, on Wednesday, 10th December at 10.30 a.m. A Grand Christmas Raffle will be held; the prizes are: a child's picture, a teddy and a gollywog (all beautifully hand made). Transport is available for those who would like it at the shopping centre from 10.30 to 11 a.m.

A Christmas Party has been organised for the children of the Village (ages 3 - 7 years). This will be held on Saturday, 20th December (3 - 5.30 p.m.); Father Christmas will be there. Each house will be visited for the sale of tickets, and we would like as much help as possible with providing refreshments.

#### Gardening, continued from p.2

A few last points. This summer we used a chemical fertilizer in a big economy pack as used by farmers, and we found that this has made a lot of difference. Clover abounds in Bar Hill because of the poorness of the soil. We were advised to use Clover, and two applications over a period of six weeks got rid of the lot. The lawn will need regular feeding to keep the clover at bay.

This is a very personal view of gardening in Bar Hill, but it might provide newcomers with a few ideas and oldcomers with a quiet laugh.

Marsha Palmann

### Gardening

People coming to live in Bar Hill are faced with quite a problem - starting a new garden from scratch. Beginning on virgin ground after extensive building does not make it easy and the type of very heavy clay soil we have here makes it doubly difficult. But looking around the village, lots of people have made excellent gardens, so there is hope.

First of all, the design. This must obviously fit in with many things - age of children, drying of washing, sitting-out area, etc. A paved area with a raised bed is a good place for sitting out and also for small children to play on when it is wet. I find the "rotary" type of clothes line the best solution for a small garden - mine is lightweight and can be folded up and put away when not in use, or at least collapsed. The concrete base is hidden by turf. When planning where the flower beds are to be in the rest of the garden, do not forget to raise them with any surplus soil, as this helps drainage.

The soil is very alkaline, so I would not add more lime. Dig it over and leave, especially in the autumn when the winter frosts will help break it up. Unless it is a very small area, seeding a lawn is more difficult than using turves. It is cheaper, but a lot more preparation must go into preparing the ground and making it as level and smooth as possible. It takes about a year before the lawn can really be used. I find turves more reliable, but of course there is less choice with the type of grass. There are lots of advertisements in the local paper for the sale of turves. Before any grass is put down, I would suggest that as much peat be dug in as possible, with a sprinkling of bone meal to help root growth.

Next the beds and what will grow easily in this area. Remember the alkaline soil which will not suit azaleas, rhododendrons, most heathers, etc., and if you want to grow these they will have to be put in a raised bed or tub with special acid soil. Trees which do not mind some waterlogging are best, e.g. willows, birches, and we have two beech trees which are not doing too badly. Do remember to watch out for sizes in a small garden. Two small shrub/trees which are useful are amelanchier (8 - 10ft) which has dainty white flowers in May, red berries in summer and brilliant foliage in autumn; and cotoneaster, excellent as a standard. This also has small, if somewhat insignificant flowers in spring, but lots of red berries in winter. Other shrubs which also seem to do well include berberis, dogwoods, viburnums, weigelia, pyracantha, potentilla, etc. Roses also do well, but remember to watch out for waterlogging. When we plant a shrub we dig down a good spit, fork over the subsoil and dig in some humus (dried grass cuttings or straw). We then add peat to the topsoil and sprinkle a few handfuls of bio humus immediately under the roots, water the hole (this is called puddling), put the plant in and backfill with the new lighter soil. We have dug in between the shrubs the first year, incorporating well-rotted manure (also advertised in the paper, though most farms or riding schools in the vicinity have some), peat and grass clippings. This year we have added only peat and grass clippings to the surface, letting the worms drag it down and aerating the soil as well. If no humus is added, the soil will just glue together again and all the digging will be wasted. If there is room for a compost heap, then nothing could be better and a wire compost-maker is not very large.

Most annuals and herbaceous plants do well. We used annuals the first year to help break up the soil, and when we pulled them up we could still dig, being careful not to damage the roots of permanent plants. We have grown lobelias, dahlias, nasturtiums, nicotianas, wall flowers, petunias and pansies, all of which have flourished. This year we have put in 250 bulbs, but those are still to come. Conifers do well if protected to some extent from the wind for the first year.

There are many excellent nurseries, and the two we use most are Scotsdale and Hemingford Park Nurseries. Tubs we bought at a farm for 5/- each and painted them dark blue or white. Pots, of which I am very fond, we picked up in Brittany last year. Six were crammed into the car along with all the camping equipment, but it was worth it.

We made a rock garden in the spring, mainly in desperation. We had such a wet year last year that we despaired of growing anything, but thought that if we made a rock garden, at least we could keep the roots out of the wet. We dug down to the subsoil, filled in the area with coarse rubble, put large rocks on top of this and mixed the soil with lots of peat again and backfilled, fitting in the large rocks as we went along. We moved the very large and heavy rocks on three rollers and a board. It felt like the building of the Pyramids.

(continued on page 1)

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